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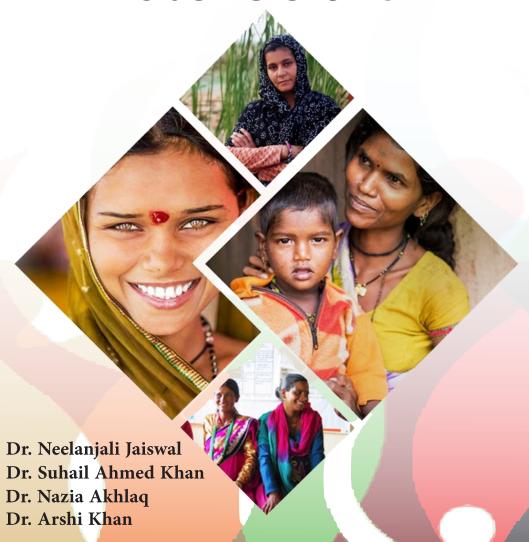
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# Women Empowerment And Inclusive Growth



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# Chapter- 3

# Myth of Emancipation: An Exploration of Buddhist Feminism in Bhutan

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#### **Abstract**

Bhutan is a small landlocked country in the Himalayan Kingdom. The country is known for its spectacular beauty and vibrant culture and traditions. The country was in isolation for the latter half of the twentieth century and when it came out, it attracted the attention of the world for its worldviews, policies and approach towards embracing modernization and development. Besides its inspiring socio-economic and political policies, Bhutan also boasts to be a gender-neutral country. It claims to provide equal opportunity, space, and position to women. The Buddhist nation also states that Bhutanese women have better social representation and cultural existence than most of the women of other South Asian countries but the ground reality is contrary to the claims and notions of the country. The present paper attempts to explore the layered religion and cultural subordination and subjection of women in the land which claims to value happiness of its individual, irrespective of gender, over everything else and package and brand the country as Shangri-La, the paradise on earth.

#### **Buddhist Feminism**

Buddhist Feminism is a growing area of study that studies the interaction between the all-embracing, egalitarian principles of Buddhism and their misogynist implications and practice. The women practicing Buddhism are the victims of "ascetic misogyny" (Byrne 181)